DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 072 546 EA 004 881

TITLE	The National Institute of Education. A Brief Outline of Its History, Status, and Tentative Plans.
INSTITUTION	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	23 Feb 73
NOTE	28p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Change; *Educational Development; Educational Planning; *Educational Practice; *Educational Research; Equal Education; Federal Legislation; Field Studies; History; Information Dissemination; Organization; Program Evaluation; Program Planning; Research; Research Problems; *Research Utilization; Student Behavior
IDENTIFIERS	*National Institute of Education; NIE

ABSTRACT

The first of this document's three major sections describes the history and rationale behind legislative and executive action that led to the creation of NIE. The second section outlines the tentative status of the four major program planning efforts at NIE. These programs are (1) the visiting scholars program; (2) the basic studies program, which includes funding for both field-initiated and exploratory studies; (3) the research development and utilization program, aimed at strengthening the R&D system and improving the links between research and practice; and (4) the programmatic research and development program, which is divided into the seven general categories of relationships between learning and work; school-based experiments; curriculum development; personnel, organization, and management; post-secondary education; early learning; and minority concerns. The final section describes the current organizational and staffing structure of NIE. A related document is EA 004 880. (JH)

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THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

A Brief Outline of Its History,

Status,

And Tentative Plans

EA 004 881

February 23, 1973

INTRODUCTION

The National Institute of Education (NIE) came into being August 1, 1973, with the broad legislative mandate "to seek to improve education...in the United States."

Its creation as a separate agency within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare culminated nearly 15 years of federal interest in the expanding field of education research and development (R&D). Its supporters hoped that NIE would consolidate and give higher status to the federal government's education R&D activities, establish a solid base for efforts to solve education problems, and advance the practice of education in general.

The concept of a federal agency to administer education R&D activities first was proposed in 1958 by an advisory board to the National Academy of Sciences. Subsequent recommendations from other sources advocating a similar agency were given impetus by a 1970 message from President Nixon to Congress urging creation of the National Institute of Education and a number of studies were undertaken to plan for such an Institute. Provisions for a National Institute of Education were introduced in 1971, reintroduced as part of the Education Amendments of 1972 and passed by the House and Senate, and signed into law by President Nixon on June 23, 1972.

NIE is now in an embryonic stage, undertaking the dual process of reviewing those projects transferred from the U.S. Office of Education and of planning its programmatic and structural organization for the coming years. Both of these planning processes are being supervised by NIE Director Thomas K. Glennan, Jr., and his staff, under the general supervision of Sidney P. Marland, Jr., Assistant Secretary of HEW for Education. Major new initiatives, however, are being held in abeyance until they can be reviewed by a 15-member National Council on Educational Research, created by the Education Amendments to establish overall policies for the Institute. At this writing, the Council, which must be nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, has not been named.

WHY AN NIE?

In his March 3, 1970 message to Congress, President Nixon said, "We must stop congratulating ourselves for spending nearly as much money on education as does the rest of the entire world -- $65 billion a year on all levels (an estimated $90 billion for fiscal 1973) -- when we are not getting as much as we should out of the dollars we spend."

As an example, the President cited the ways in which achieving equal educational opportunity has been approached. "We must stop letting wishes color our judgments about the educational effectiveness of many special compensatory programs, when -- despite some dramatic and encouraging exceptions -- there is growing evidence that most of them are not yet measurably improving the success of poor children in schools."

Stressing that the most important question to be asked about education is what children learn, the President said, "Fine new buildings alone do not predict high achievement. Pupil-teacher ratios may not make as much difference as we used to think. Expensive equipment may not make as much difference as its salesmen would have us believe.

"And yet we know," the President said, "that something does make a difference....We do not have equal educational opportunity in America."

As a solution to these problems, the President said, "The purpose of the National Institute of Education would be to begin the serious systematic search for new knowledge needed to make educational opportunity truly equal."

Although the need for an NIE seemed pressing and its mission appeared challenging when first delineated by the President three years ago, studies since then (many undertaken as part of the NIE planning process) have made the need seem even more pressing and the challenge even greater.

For example, one of the most comprehensive studies undertaken of education research, How Effective Is Schooling? A Critical Review and Synthesis of Research Findings, reports, "Research has found nothing that consistently and unambiguously makes a difference in student outcomes."

The study, carried out for the President's Commission on School Finance, found "numerous examples of educational practices that do seem to have significantly affected student outcomes..." but "other studies found the same educational practice to be ineffective; and we have no clear idea why this discrepancy exists. In short, research has not discovered any educational practice (or set of practices) that offers a high probability of success over time and place."

In another conclusion with equally important implications for a National Institute of Education, the study reports that education research suffers "in virtually every area" from serious methodological problems, ranging from inadequate measures

of school results and inadequate controls over actual implementation of experimental techniques to a failure to consider the cost implications of research findings.

Yet the conduct of education R&D must be improved if American education is to be improved, as Roger Levien points out in a Rand paper, National Institute of Education: Preliminary Plan for the Proposed Institute:

> "In some cases desirable change is impeded by lack of funds. In some cases, tradition or institutional inertia blocks the way. In still other cases, there is no one to catalyst the necessary change. But in a great many cases, there is simply not enough known to point the way to desirable change: we do not know enough about how to design new forms of education; train and select educational personnel more effectively; reshape institutions so that they become more flexible and responsive; develop and introduce contemporary curricula into the schools; or make instruction at all levels more personal and adaptive. Nor do we know enough about how to obtain the funds essential to change; overcome resistance to useful change; develop agents of change; or provide the best current knowledge to those who need it to bring about change. Lack of knowledge is a major impediment to achieving improvement and reform of American education."

> "...While random and casual processes of learning about education will continue, they are insufficient. Educational R&D is necessary to gain the knowledge needed for educational improvement and reform."

Levien goes on to point out that while education R&D cannot provide any panaceas, it can, for example, provide:

—an increasing understanding of the educational process.

—more contemporary curricula.

—alternate forms of education, adapted to different kinds of lifestyles.

—better information about the education system's strengths and weaknesses.

—better understanding about the implications of educational policies before they are implemented.

It is not surprising, then, that the establishment of a federal agency responsible for education research and development found strong support among educators, researchers, and policy-makers.

HISTORY OF THE NIE

Proposals

The first proposal related to a National Institute of Education was made in 1958 by an advisory board set up by the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council. The board envisioned an educational institute comparable to the National Institute of Mental Health, and in refining its proposals, called for the establishment of an Organization for Research in Education to conduct and sponsor educational research.

No action was taken then, but in 1964, the Panel on Educational Research and Development of the President's Science Advisory Committee recommended that "institutional arrangements" be made "for the initiation and management of new research programs and for the dissemination of results."

Momentum increased in 1969 with a proposal by David Krathwohl of the Syracuse University School of Education, then President of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), for National Institutes of Education similar to the National Institutes of Health. In an address to the AERA annual convention, Krathwohl suggested that the institutes be separate from the Office of Education, with both agencies reporting to a newly created post of Assistant Secretary for Education:

> "The National Institutes of Education would consist of a central coordinating staff which would, like NIH, work with a series of institutes, each focused on a critical education problem....It would carry out the program largely by working with those educational institutions, industries, and laboratories with appropriate capabilities. In-house research would be carried on only if there were clear advantages. Problems around which an institute would be constituted could be as broad as urban education, or as circumscribed as the program now carried on by the Bureau of the Handicapped" (in the U.S. Office of Education).

Six months after Krathwohl presented his proposal, the Commission on Instructional Technology also proposed National Institutes of Education to "develop, support, and fund greatly strengthened programs in educational research, development, and application." In its report, To Improve Learning, the Commission recommended that the institutes be governed by a council of government and nongovernment representatives and the directors of the various institutes. The Commission also recommended that the institutes perform a relatively small amount of in-house research and development, with most of the activity being conducted under grants. The Commission also urged close ties with other relevant research and development efforts nationwide.

The President's Message

Much of the substance of these proposals found its way into the President's 1970 education message: "As the first step toward reform, we need a coherent approach to research

and experimentation. Local schools need an objective national body to evaluate new departures in teaching that are being conducted here and abroad and a means of disseminating information about projects that show promise."

The message called for creation of the National Institute of Education within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It would have "a permanent staff of outstanding scholars from such disciplines as psychology, biology, and the social sciences as well as education." He proposed that the Institute conduct some in-house research, and that the bulk of its work be carried on by universities and other organizations. He also urged that it be guided by a council of "distinguished scientists, educators, and laymen to ensure that educational research in the institute achieves a high level of sophistication and rigor."

He added that the institute would set priorities for educational research and experimentation, and link activities of other federal agencies "to the attainment of particular national goals." He also said that the institute would "develop criteria and measures for enabling localities to assess educational achievement and for evaluating particular educational programs, and would provide technical assistance to state and local agencies seeking to evaluate their own programs."

Legislation

Legislation to create the National Institute of Education was introduced in the 91st Congress shortly after the President's message was delivered, but that Congress adjourned before the bill could be brought to a vote.

When the 92nd Congress convened, the NIE legislation was reintroduced. During the course of committee deliberations on the Education Amendments of 1971, the NIE proposal received strong bipartisan support and was included in final committee prints of those Amendments. The Senate version was approved and forwarded to the House, which passed it with changes. A conference committee resolved the differences between the two versions, and released its report and recommendations to the House and Senate on May 22, 1972. The conference bill, by now the Education Amendments of 1972, was passed by the Senate on May 24 and by the House on June 8, and was signed into law on June 23, 1972.

The Act

Title III of the Act establishes an Education Division in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, headed by an Assistant Secretary for Education. This Division includes the Office of Education and the National Institute of Education, both reporting separately to the Secretary of HEW through the Assistant Secretary.

Title III also "declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide every person an equal opportunity to receive an education of high quality regardless of his race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or social class."

It notes that "although the American educational system has pursued this objective, it has not yet attained that objective. Inequalities of opportunity to receive high quality education remain pronounced. To achieve quality will require far more dependable knowledge about the processes of learning and education than now exists or can be expected from present research and experimentation in this field."

While stressing that "the direction of the education system remains the primary responsibility of state and local governments," Congress declared that the federal government "has a clear responsibility to provide leadership in the conduct and support of scientific inquiry into the educational process." The Act then establishes NIE to carry out this policy by:

—helping to solve or alleviate the problems of, and achieve the objectives of American education;

—advancing the practice of education, as an art, science, and profession;

—strengthening the scientific and technological foundations of education; and

--building an effective educational research and development system.

The Act also establishes a National Council on Educational Research: to formulate general polices for the Institute; to prescribe the directors' powers and duties; to advise the Assistant Secretary and the director on program development; to recommend improved methods of collecting and disseminating educational research findings; to conduct studies necessary to fulfill its own functions; and to submit annual reports on the Institute's activities and on education and educational research in general. The 15 Council members are to serve three-year terms,* and as noted above, are to be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Through the Institute, the director is authorized to "conduct educational research; collect and disseminate the findings of educational research; train individuals in educational research; assist and foster such research, collection, dissemination, or training through grants, or technical assistance to, or jointly financed cooperative arrangements

*Except those appointed the first year. Of these, five will serve one-year terms; five, two-year terms; and five, three-year terms.

with, public or private organizations, institutions, agencies, or individuals; and promote the coordination of such research and research support within the federal government."

Planning

Planning for an NIE began shortly after the President's 1970 message was delivered, and proceeded simultaneously with the Congressional debate.

Commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland, Jr., (later to be named Assistant Secretary for Education), instructed Harry Silberman, director of the Office of Education's National Center for Educational Research and Development (NCERD) to plan NIE's proposed functions, organization, and administration and the proposed transfer of NCERD programs to NIE.

A steering committee subsequently was formed, including officials from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; the Office of Education; the Office of Management and Budget; and the Office of Science and Technology. Dr. Marland then established an NIE Planning Unit in winter, 1971, and Silberman left his NCERD post to become director of the planning unit.

The new unit's primary responsibility was to suggest appropriate research and development directions and activities for NIE. It attempted to respond to contributions from a wide variety of sources, and elicited ideas and suggestions from representatives of various academic disciplines, practitioners, and various interest groups concerned with education. Formal planning papers were commissioned from many of these groups, and circulated for comment.

Following an Interim Status Report in January, 1972, the unit decided to sponsor more specific papers, each suggesting a particular agenda for NIE. In spring, 1972, four groups were asked to analyze education problems and suggest methods for solving them, with the results intended to suggest a rationale for the Institute's 1973 research and development agenda. The analysis groups were headed by Senta Raizen and Beverly Kooi, members of the planning unit; O.W. Markley of the Stanford Research Institute; and Amitai Etzioni of Columbia University's Center for Policy Research. Their reports were completed during May, 1972, and are important elements in NIE's current program planning.

At the same time, the Rand Corporation was commissioned to develop a number of studies for the proposed Institute's organizational structure. These papers, also, are being used in current planning efforts.

NIE'S CURRENT OPERATIONS

NIE officially came into being on August 1, 1972, with the appointment of Emerson Elliott, a member of the planning unit, as acting director, and the transfer from the U. S. Office of Education of about 80 people and about $90 million worth of programs—primarily career education model development, experimental schools, researcher training, NCERD's education laboratories and regional R&D centers, the basic and applied studies of the Division of Research, and the dissemination activities of the National Center for Educational Communication.

In October, the President nominated Thomas K. Glennan, Jr., then director of planning, research, and evaluation at the Office of Economic Opportunity, as NIE's first director. He was confirmed by the Senate and sworn in on November 1.

Activities since August 1 have focused on reviewing the programs transferred from the Office of Education and on planning future activities to be reviewed by the National Council when it is appointed.

The following discussion outlines the tentative* status of these program planning efforts, as well as the status of the programs transferred from OE. The activities can be

*Despite the affirmative wording of the following text, the NIE Council must provide policy guidance on all the activities discussed. Therefore, the statements should be regarded as staff proposals.

broken into four general areas: a "visiting scholars" activity, basic studies, research and development and utilization system, and programmatic research and development.

1. VISITING SCHOLARS

NIE plans to invite nationally distinguished education scholars and practitioners to work at the Institute for one to three years, doing their own research or serving as resources for the Institute's permanent staff on other research activities. The scholars may also be asked to work as a group on specific themes of interest to the Institute.

2. BASIC STUDIES

NIE's field-initiated and exploratory studies activities will attempt to achieve the legislative objective of "strengthening the scientific and technical foundations of education" by developing new information, defining educational problems, and analyzing alternatives for policymakers.

A. Field-Initiated Studies

This activity will fund research on virtually any topic relevant to American education, enabling NIE to respond to ideas and expertise of scholars in the field. It will provide grants or contracts to individuals or institutions submitting proposals dealing with scientific knowledge, solutions to specific problems, or the goals and issues of education. NIE's director will make the awards on the basis of the recommendations of nongovernment panelists, who will review the proposals submitted in a national competition.

Awards will be made in three categories:

--Grants for Research in Education, designed for experienced investigators in any field, except those included in the "selected disciplines."

--Selected Disciplines, designed to encourage researchers outside the traditional education community to apply their expertise to education problems. In fiscal 1973, the selected disciplines are anthropology, economics, political science, and legal research.

--Small Grants, designed to help qualified but less experienced scholars in any field who have not yet achieved strong records of research activity.

B. Exploratory Studies

This activity will include more directed inquiries into the nature and dimensions of specific education problems. For example, specific areas tentatively slated for investigation include:

--Goals: development of a clearer understanding of what students, the community, and society expect from education systems.

--Reading: a study of how children learn to read and the impact of higher literacy rates on society.

—Use of resources: development of better information about available financial resources, experiments with more effective ways to use resources, and development of ways to improve the decision-making process at the school level.

—Curriculum and the instructional process: studies of experience to date, support of activities designed to define educational objectives and means of achieving them, and development of new approaches and techniques.

—Higher education: particularly studies of finance and governance.

3. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION SYSTEMS

NIE is responsible under its law for "building an effective educational research and development system," i.e., that combination of people, instructions, and procedures which results in "high quality" research.

A. Strengthening the Research and Development System

The Institute plans to undertake studies aimed at determining how NIE can attract high quality people into education related R&D and develop support systems to enhance their work. Tentative departure points include: a description of available R&D resources, alternate conceptual designs for research and development systems, studies on characteristics of good R&D organizations, identifying and training new kinds of personnel to be involved in R&D activities, and analyses of existing R&D.

B. Linking Research to Practice

NIE's legislation includes a mandate to conduct dissemination and utilization activities, a vital factor in improving the practice of education. NIE has established a panel to advise the Institute on the nature of educational reform, factors that promote or inhibit sustained reform, and the application of these findings to the dissemination and utilization process. The panel will include scholars, developers, practitioners, researchers, media personnel, and other outside experts.

C. Dissemination of Research and Development Findings

NIE also plans to continue to support and improve efforts distributing education research and development findings to the field. The largest on-going activity in this area is ERIC, the Educational Resources Information Center, an educational document retrieval system which provides quick access to education literature. NIE hopes to maintain ERIC and at the same time close gaps in present coverage, develop standardized management procedures for the ERIC clearinghouses that acquire, abstract, index, and announce current educational literature; and insure that the clearinghouses can respond and contribute to NIE dissemination programs. In addition, NIE will examine the criteria used by the clearinghouses to select documents for the ERIC system, conduct a cost analysis of ERIC, and study ways to promote feedback to ERIC designers and managers to make the system more relevant to its users.

4. PROGRAMMATIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

This area is designed to implement the legislative directive of "helping to solve or alleviate the problems of American education." These activities are focused on specific problem areas, are designed to develop specific solutions to problems or to improve the practice of education, and are generally ongoing large-scale developmental or demonstration efforts with finite lives. NIE's exploratory studies may lead to developmental efforts in other areas, or to redirection of these existing efforts.

Many of the following projects are being conducted by the regional educational laboratories and research and development centers. During 1973, NIE is shifting its support from the labs and centers as institutions to the programs they conduct. By 1973, these institutions will compete on an equal basis with other contractors for new awards.

Programmatic research and development may be broken into seven general categories: relationship between learning and work; school initiated experiments; curriculum development; personnel, organization, and management; post secondary; early learning; and minority concerns.

A. Relationship Between Learning and Work

For purposes of NIE's activities, career education has been defined as the development of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to help individuals and groups obtain, hold, or advance in a job or series of jobs that constitute a career.

In 1973, NIE will review the laboratory programs and four "models" transferred from the Office of Education. New activities will emphasize the relationship between learning and work, particularly as it applies to young people's career entry and adults' career progression.

The four models deal with (1) developing career education K-12 curriculum units across all subject levels, (2) exploring and developing the actual workplace as a locus for education, stressing interaction between youth and adults, (3) expanding and improving the options of home-based adults for employment in the future, and (4) providing rural low-income families with career education in a residential setting to improve their employability and standard of living.

Nine programs at four institutions deal with a diversity of issues in career and vocational education. They include processes used by students in making career decisions, the development of career planning support systems, and insertion of career information into existing curricula.

B. School Based Experiments

Several large development and demonstration programs administered by NIE are based to some extent on proposals from school systems. Activities planned within this category include the experimental schools program, the D.C. schools project, and governance (education vouchers).

The experimental schools project attempts to introduce comprehensive changes into the school system: curriculum changes,

approaches to instruction, organization, systems of governance, and community participation. The projects represent a unique group of laboratories, which NIE will examine for transferable results.

The D. C. Schools project is designed to increase the cognitive and emotional growth of children in the Washington, D. C., school system. It emphasizes individualized classroom techniques, career orientation, revitalized curriculum, strong community organization, and community participation in local school policymaking.

The education voucher experiment is proposed to be transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunity to NIE in Fiscal 1974. The experiment is designed to determine parental satisfaction with a system that allows them to select school programs from among several alternatives for their children. The parents receive a voucher for each child; the voucher then is given to the school the parent chooses. The vouchers are redeemed for roughly the per pupil cost of education in the district.

C. Curriculum Development

One major set of activities will involve the use of a National Aeronautics and Space Administration Advanced Telecommunications Satellite (NASA ATS/F) to provide career education and early childhood instruction to residents of isolated areas in the Rocky Mountain States, Alaska, and Appalachia.

Another activity seeks to develop, test, and disseminate instruction geared to individual differences among students.

"Typical" school curricula in mathematics, language arts, science, and social studies are redeveloped and field tested in schools across the country. One component, mathematics, has been completed and is commercially available. An individualized program for adults in communications skills and mathematics also has been developed and is being field tested.

D. Personnel, Organization, and Management

Some 17 projects at eight institutions are looking at the problems of personnel, organization, and management in education. Several are designed to develop strategies for improving teacher effectiveness; others are studying the effects of team teaching, the impact of different kinds of school organization or teacher behavior, and better ways of training teachers.

E. Post-Secondary Education

These programs are designed to strengthen institutional capability by developing improved management and communications systems which can be used by higher education administrators.

One project is designed to improve instructional relevance in junior colleges; another is developing first and second year college courses for broadcast over educational television.

F. Early Learning

Eight projects relating to the learning process of young children are being carried out in five education labs and

centers. The projects include efforts to increase the cognitive skills of disadvantaged preschoolers, learn how young children acquire ideas, analyze individual differences in attention and learning capabilities of infants and young children, and design a new delivery system for preschool education in sparsely populated rural areas.

G. Minority Concerns

Several projects are attempting to assist Pacific Northwest Indian children improve their ability to speak, read, write, and understand English; develop bilingual instructional materials for children 5 to 8; and develop instructional programs for children in rural areas and for poor Mexican-American children under six.

NIE STAFFING AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Although NIE is far from having a formal organization structure, two major staff offices have been created and their directors named. The Office of Management, which is responsible for planning, budgeting, program review, management analyses, and organizational development activities, is being headed by Bernard Martin, formerly of the Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Office of Education. Ernest Russell, formerly of the Office of Economic Opportunity, is head of the Institute's Office of Administration, which is responsible for equipment and facilities, personnel, grants and contracts, finance, and general services. In addition, two senior advisers to the director have been named: John Mays, formerly of the Office of Science and Technology, and Richard Werksman, formerly of the Office of Economic Opportunity.

The structure of the line, or program offices, still is being debated as this paper is written. However, a favored arrangement calls for one office that would be concerned with developing R&D capabilities in the field, disseminating R&D results to the researcher and practitioner communities, facilitating the use of information from R&D activities, and funding field-initiated studies. Another program office would undertake various forms of small in-house and contract research, including exploratory studies, problem definition activities, syntheses of knowledge, basic theoretical studies and

more policy-oriented analyses. A third grouping of programs would include large-scale developmental and experimental programs, such as experimental schools and career education.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION....

A bibliography of the various papers commissioned by the NIE planning unit, copies of NIE's enabling legislation, and general information about NIE's activities are available from:

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